Mad in America
SCIENCE, PSYCHIATRY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

# Psychologists with Lived Experience Face Stigma and Discrimination, Study Finds

*A new study finds clinical psychologists with lived experience of mental illness are adversely impacted by witnessing discrimination and stigma.*

By **Ashley Bobak, PsyD** - July 10, 2024

Prosumers, or clinical psychologists who are both providers and consumers of mental health services, are negatively affected by witnessing discrimination of persons with lived experiences of mental health issues. A new study published in *Psychological Services* investigates how witnessed discrimination impacts prosumers' experiences of internalized stigma, anticipated stigma, and stigma resistance. The results highlight that even "experts" in the field of psychology are subject to experiencing distress and stigma related to mental health struggles.

Researchers Laura López-Aybar of the Derner School of Psychology at Adelphi University and Lauren Gonzales of Columbia University describe their study:

**"Discrimination against those with mental illness is widespread in clinical psychology, including among prosumers. This study found that prosumers often witness discrimination by colleagues, leading to internalized stigma and stigma resistance. Further research is needed to address stigmatizing attitudes and discriminatory behaviors in the clinical psychology field and promote inclusivity and reduce discrimination against individuals with mental illness."**

Mental health stigma is an international issue. A recent study across hundreds of countries found that there is a widely held assumption that people with psychiatric diagnoses are violent and unlikely to recover. Unsurprisingly, this stigma harms the quality of life of those who are subjected to it, as it negatively affects physical health and leads to distress and social and professional ostracization.

This content is restricted to buyers of .

**Ashley Bobak, PsyD**

Ashley Bobak is a licensed psychologist and earned her doctoral degree in Clinical-Community Psychology from Point Park University. She is interested in the intersections of philosophy, history, and psychology and is using this intersection as a lens to examine substance addiction. She hopes to develop and promote alternative approaches to conceptualizing and treating psychopathology that maintain and revere human dignity.